

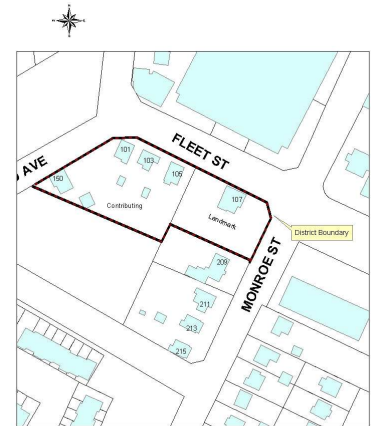
**CITY OF ROCKVILLE PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

July 2, 2008

SUBJECT: Map Amendment 2008-00104, Historic District Zoning for 150 Maryland Avenue, and 101, 103, 105 and 107 Fleet Street, as Rockville Heights Historic District

Applicant: Mayor and Council of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Owner: Montgomery County Government
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850



Rockville Heights Historic District
Proposed Boundaries

Location: 150 Maryland Avenue, 101,103, 105 and 107 Fleet Street

Planning Commission Review Date: July 2, 2008

Mayor and Council Public Hearing Date (scheduled): July 28, 2008

REQUEST:

The applicant seeks to change the zoning of 1.6586 acres of land, bounded by Maryland Avenue, Fleet Street and Monroe Street and identified as 101, 103, 105 and 107 Fleet Street and 150 Maryland Avenue, from R-90 to R-90 HD (Historic District).

PREVIOUS RELATED ACTIONS:

- The Historic District Commission held a preliminary review for historic district eligibility of the subject properties on October 16, 2003 at the request of the property owner.
- The Historic District Commission formally made an evaluation of significance of the subject properties on June 16, 2005. The HDC recommended designation of 150 Maryland Avenue, 101, 103, 105 and 107 Fleet Street as a local historic district.
- The Historic District Commission evaluated 209, 211, 213 and 215 Monroe Street as a separate historic district, or as a historic district with the Casey and Blandford subdivisions across Monroe Street, on July 21, 2005, but did not recommend them as eligible as a local historic district.
- The Mayor and Council authorized filing of this map amendment on October 17, 2005. The designation process was anticipated to occur in conjunction with a development

Staff Report
MAP2008-00104

proposal in the form of an RTH initial application. This application could not be processed because it was predicated on the Text Amendment for modifications to the RTH procedure, which was not approved.

- Although no application has been filed, Staff recommends that the designation process proceed at this time to provide greater certainty regarding the review process for future development applications.

RELEVANT ISSUES

Upon authorization to file the map amendment, the Mayor and Council inquired about the properties' potential if restored. In response to this inquiry, the City hired Miche Booz Architect, Inc. in 2006 to provide a concept level proposal for redevelopment of the block and provide renderings of what the existing houses could look like if returned to their original appearance. The resulting report (Attachment 4) includes site plan, streetscape view, early concept renderings showing new townhouses and detached houses interwoven with the historic fabric, and renderings depicting proposed rehabilitations of the historic houses. This proposal was based on retaining all of the houses and garages on the block except 209 Monroe Street and assumed an RTH overlay zone. The report notes that the houses are considered to be structurally stable but the scope of the study did not include an interior inspection or analysis of the costs required to bring the structures up to current codes and living standards.

The property owner, Montgomery County Government, initially opposed historic designation but has since indicated that it would be willing to incorporate the five houses into a development proposal for senior housing. In recent months, Staff has met with representatives from Montgomery County Government and Victory Housing to discuss the possibility of developing a senior housing facility on the block. As currently proposed, the property owner and developer would not oppose retention of the five houses (101, 103, 105 and 107 Fleet Street and 150 Maryland Avenue) but the site plan indicates demolition of the three garages to allow for a drive aisle and parking to serve the new facility. The developer is interested in reducing the environmental setting/historic district boundary that was recommended by the Historic District Commission (see Attachment 6). The boundary line recommended by the HDC follows the deeded property lines for the five houses (Attachment 7).

ANALYSIS

Background

The evaluation for historic significance was considered by the Historic District Commission on June 16, 2005. At that time, the Historic District Commission recommended that 150 Maryland Avenue, and 101, 103, 105 and 107 Fleet Street be designated as a local historic district. The HDC found that it is significant for its association with persons and events important to Rockville history; for architectural and design significance illustrating period

Staff Report
MAP2008-00104

styles; and because it represents a concise history of the development of Rockville Heights in the first half of the 20th century.

Historic district designation will ensure that the Historic District Commission will review future alterations and development proposed for this block. The HDC will have regulatory review over changes proposed within the district boundaries and courtesy review over alterations adjacent to, abutting, or confronting the historic district boundaries.

Property Descriptions

The Fleet Street row of houses faces north, starting with 101 Fleet Street at the corner of Fleet Street and Maryland Avenue. The houses, except 107 Fleet Street, are unified in front setback, lot size, site layout and period of construction and were constructed between 1926 and 1936. The house at 107 Fleet Street was built earlier, in 1904. 150 Maryland Avenue is located around the corner and faces west. It was built in 1926.

101 Fleet Street is a rectangular-shaped house with one-story enclosed front and rear porches and composition shingled side gabled roof. It was built in early 20th century vernacular style. Its symmetrical front fenestration suggests Colonial Revival influence. The stucco finish and enclosure of the porch are alterations that are considered reversible. The lot has been reduced in size by the widening of Fleet Street and Maryland Avenue. There is a single-car detached garage to the rear of the house on the east side.

103 Fleet Street is a Tudor-inspired frame and stucco house with rectangular massing. It is two and one-half stories, two bays wide and two bays deep. It has an extended front gable which establishes asymmetry and forms a porte-cochere side porch. The house has a beveled concrete block foundation, stucco exterior finish and composition shingle roof. There is a central interior chimney and an open rear porch. A single-car detached garage is located to the rear on the east side.

105 Fleet Street is a rectangular two and one-half story, two-bay by three-bay Colonial Revival. However, the central pedimented dormer with prominent friezeboard and full-width Doric columned front porch suggest Greek Revival elements and the windows are typical Craftsman style. The house is finished with stucco and has a side-gabled roof with composition shingles. There is an exterior brick chimney on the east and an interior chimney on the west side. The foundation is brick.

107 Fleet Street faces north on Fleet Street at Monroe Street on a large corner lot. It was designed in Colonial Revival style with numerous Colonial Revival details. It has square massing with a Rockville Bay, wrap porch and rear porch extension. The hipped roof is covered with composition shingles and the frame house is clad in German siding.

150 Maryland Avenue is a two and one-half story Colonial Revival house with a Doric-columned one-story hipped roof front porch. The pyramidal-ridge roof is covered with asphalt composition shingles and contains a central north-facing dormer with two windows. There are some of the same Greek Revival features that are evident at 105 Fleet Street. Window trim and extended eaves reference the Craftsman style. There is a double-car garage located to the rear of the house.

Architecture

The five houses are all products of the first half of the twentieth century. The houses share similar construction and materials. They were stick built on-site of wood and masonry products. The period of construction was before air conditioning was commonly available or affordable. All of the houses have front porches and traditional double-sash windows on all elevations for cross ventilation. Together they represent an intact streetscape which illustrates the development of the Rockville Heights subdivision. They are unified in front setbacks and retain their residential appearance though they have been adapted to accommodate office uses of several Montgomery County government agencies.

There are three detached wood frame garages, associated with 101 and 105 Fleet Street and 150 Maryland Avenue, that were built contemporary with the houses and are also considered contributing resources.

IMPACTS

The underlying zone and permitted uses will not change. If the historic property is sold to a private owner, they may be eligible for tax credits for maintenance and rehabilitation after designation. If the property is designated, proposals for exterior alterations will require a Certificate of Approval from the Historic District Commission (HDC) prior to issuance of building permits or commencement of work. The Maryland Historical Trust requires MHT pre-approval of rehabilitation work to retain eligibility for state tax credits.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission is required to review and make recommendations to the Mayor and Council on all applications for map amendments by determining whether the zoning change for designation is consistent with the City's master plans. The four Fleet Street houses are included in the Historic Buildings Catalog (1989). Staff considers this application to be consistent with the *Comprehensive Master Plan* (2000), and the *Town Center Master Plan* (2001). The *Comprehensive Master Plan* notes that "there are scattered homes throughout the planning area (PA4) that have some historical or architectural significance although they are not within the historic district. There are also many examples of early twentieth century bungalows and colonial revival homes that are interesting architecturally and contribute to the historic and residential character of the (West End /Woodley Gardens) neighborhood. There are areas where the historic district could be expanded."¹ The recommendation in Appendix B of the *Town Center Master Plan* states that "The purpose of delineating the historic properties in Town Center is to ensure that redevelopment in Town Center is sensitive to the resources in the planning area...It is likely that changes to existing programs, such as the expansion of the historic districts or designations of additional sites, will take place in the future." The *Town Center Master Plan* recommends rezoning the entire block

¹ Comprehensive Master Plan (2002), p.11-17.

Staff Report
MAP2008-00104

“at the southwest corner of Fleet and Monroe from R-90 to R-30, or to a new zone that would allow for an appropriate scale of single-family attached or multifamily development.”² These additional residential uses could be accommodated on the site with the historic district intact. The Planning Commission is asked to determine if this proposed zoning change is generally consistent with the City’s master plans.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission find this proposal to be consistent with the adopted *Comprehensive Master Plan* (2000) and the *Town Center Master Plan* (2001) and forward a positive recommendation for Map Amendment MAP2008-00104 to the Mayor and Council with the HDC-recommended boundary.

NOTIFICATION

Notices of the Planning Commission recommendation and meeting were sent via first class mail to nearby property owners, the West End Civic Association, adjacent property owners and other interested parties for the July 2, 2008 meeting. The staff report, attachments and the meeting agenda were posted on the City’s web page.

Notices of the Historic District Commission (HDC) evaluation and meeting were sent via first class mail to the property owners, the West End Civic Association, adjacent property owners and other interested parties on June 9, 2005 for the June 16, 2005 HDC meeting. The staff report including site history, photographs of the site and neighborhood, and the agenda for the evaluation meeting were also posted on the city’s web page.

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Maryland Historical Trust Form
3. HDC Minutes, June 16, 2005
4. Fleet Street Historic Property Redevelopment Proposal, Miche Booz Archtiect, Inc., August 31, 2006
5. Fleet Street Senior Housing Historic Boundary Exhibit (boundary lines recommended by Historic District Commission vs. property owner/ Victory Housing)
6. Victory Housing Submission to the City of Rockville Planning Department, June 11, 2008
7. Historic District survey map showing part lots 1,2 and 6 through 13, block 2

² Rockville Town Center Master Plan, pp.88-89 and proposed zoning map.